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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TRAVEL WARNING - ERITREA

¶1. The U.S. Department of State warns U.S. citizens of the risks of travel to Eritrea and recommends that U.S. citizens defer all travel there because of Eritrean government restrictions on travel outside the capital city of Asmara, an increased number of Americans arrested without clear justification, and heightened tensions along Eritrea's borders with Ethiopia and Djibouti. This replaces the Travel Warning dated February 18, 2009.

¶2. The Eritrean government continues to restrict the travel of all foreign nationals, including resident diplomats. These restrictions require all visitors and residents to apply 10 days in advance for permission to travel outside the Asmara city limits. As a result, the U.S. Embassy cannot provide emergency consular assistance outside of Asmara.

¶3. There also have been an increased number of Eritrean-U.S. dual citizens arrested without apparent cause. U.S. citizens are cautioned that once arrested, one may be held for a long time without being charged before being released. Recently incarcerated Americans report harsh prison conditions, with little or no food and water, and unsanitary surroundings. The Eritrean government does not inform the U.S. Embassy when U.S. citizens, including those who are not dual nationals, have been arrested or detained.

¶4. U.S. citizens are strongly advised to avoid travel near the Eritrean-Ethiopian border and to the Southern Red Sea region, including the port of Assab.

¶5. U.S. citizens considering travel within Eritrea should be aware of the presence of large numbers of Eritrean and Ethiopian troops along the Eritrean-Ethiopian border, and acute political tensions between the two countries. In March 2008, Eritrean restrictions on diesel fuel supplies caused the

United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea's detachments to withdraw from the Temporary Security Zone, leaving no international observers monitoring the border.

¶6. Since April 2008, Djiboutian and Eritrean troops have been deployed along the Eritrea-Djibouti border. The Djiboutian government claims Eritrean troops have crossed into its territory and on June 10, 2008, Djiboutian and Eritrean troops exchanged fire along their shared border.

¶7. U.S. citizens currently living or traveling in Eritrea are strongly encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy in Asmara in person or through the State Department's travel registration web site, <https://travelregistration.state.gov>, and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Eritrea. By registering, U.S. citizens make it easier for the Embassy to contact them in case of an emergency and provide updates on the security situation. The U.S. Embassy is located at 179 Alaa Street, P.O. Box 211, Asmara; telephone (291-1) 12-00-04, available 24 hours in case of emergency; fax (291-1) 124-255 and (291-1) 127-584; web site <http://asmara.usembassy.gov/>.

¶8. For additional information, consult the Department of State's Country Specific Information sheet for Eritrea and the Worldwide Caution at <http://travel.state.gov>. American citizens may also obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada, or 1-202-501-4444 from overseas.

¶9. Minimize considered.

CLINTON